Railway Servants (Discipline & Appeal) Rules.

Proposal to exclude sugar from PDS

*348. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to exclude sugar from the public distribution system;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Kerala Government has opposed this move as it will result in the increase in the prices of sugar particularly in non-producing States like Kerala; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) and (b) The Mahajan Committee constituted to study and make recommendations in respect of the sugarcane and sugar sectors, has submitted its report on 15.4.1998. One of the recommendations of the Committee is to discontinue supply of sugar to the PDS. It has been suggested that this may be phased out over a period of 2 years. It has also been suggested that the statutory levy percentage be reduced to 20% from the beginning of the next sugar season, and that it be retained at that level for two years. After the expiry of these two years, the collection of levy sugar from mills be abolished. Further, if Government wishes to continue PDS, the sugar be obtained at market prices from mills.

The views of the concerned Ministries/Departments, as well as State Governments/UT Administrations, have been called for on the suggestion for discontinuance of sugar from PDS. In this connection, a meeting under the Chairmanship of Minister of Food & Consumer Affairs was held on 25.6.98 in which the State Ministers for Food & Civil Supplies were invited and their views in the matter were ascertained. The Matter is under exmination in the Government.

(c) and (d) Yes, the Government of Kerala has expressed reservations in regard to the suggestion of discontinuance of sugar from PDS. The views of the Government of Kerala, as well as of other States/UTs, are under consideration in the Government.

Administering of spurious Polio Drop Vaccines

*349. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:
SHRI N.R. DASARI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 65000 children in Western UP were administered spurious polio drop vaccines imported from Belgium during the last pulse polio programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any enquiry has been conducted into the matter; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) to (d) Oral Polio Vaccine is administered to children under Universal Immunization Programme and under Pulse Polio Immunization Programme. Under Universal Immunization Programme, polio vaccine is administered in three doses, first at the age of six weeks, second at the age of 10 weeks and the third at the age of 14 weeks and a booster dose is given when the child is 1-1/2 years old. Under Pulse Polio Programme all children below the age of five years are given polio vaccine twice a year, once in December and again in the following January. Oral Polio vaccine for both these programmes is procured from Indian manufacturers and some vaccine is obtained as commodity